

IN THE CLAIMS:

~~Please cancel claims 1-14 and 16, without prejudice or disclaimer.~~

Please add the following new claims:

RJL:11
17. (New) A variant vascular endothelial cell growth factor (VEGF) polypeptide which is capable of binding to a VEGF receptor without significantly inducing a VEGF response, said variant polypeptide comprising an amino acid modification of at least one cysteine residue in VEGF, wherein said amino acid modification inhibits disulfide bond formation.

18. (New) The variant VEGF polypeptide according to claim 17 wherein said amino acid modification is a substitution of said at least one cysteine residue with a different amino acid which is incapable of participating in the formation of a disulfide bond.

G
19. (New) The variant VEGF polypeptide according to claim 18 wherein said cysteine is at amino acid position 51 and/or 60.

20. (New) The variant VEGF polypeptide according to claim 17 wherein said VEGF polypeptide is capable of inhibiting induction of a VEGF response.

21. (New) The variant VEGF polypeptide according to claim 20 wherein said variant VEGF response is mitogenic activity.

22. (New) The variant VEGF polypeptide according to claim 18 wherein two cysteines are substituted with a different amino acid at amino acid positions 51 and 60.

~~23.~~ (New) The variant VEGF polypeptide according to claim ¹⁹ ~~18~~ wherein said cysteine is at amino acid position 51.

~~24.~~ (New) The variant VEGF polypeptide according to claim ¹⁹ ~~18~~ wherein said cysteine is at amino acid position 60.

~~25.~~ (New) The variant VEGF polypeptide according to claim ¹⁹ ~~18~~ wherein aspartic acid is substituted for cysteine.

~~26.~~ (New) The variant VEGF polypeptide according to claim ²⁴ ~~23~~ comprising the substitution C51D.

~~27.~~ (New) The variant VEGF polypeptide according to claim ²⁵ ~~24~~ comprising the substitution C60D.

~~28.~~ (New) The variant VEGF polypeptide according to claim ¹⁸ ~~17~~ wherein said amino acid modification is a chemical modification of said at least one cysteine residue which renders said cysteine residue incapable of participating in the formation of a disulfide bond.

~~29.~~ (New) The variant VEGF polypeptide according to claim ²⁹ ~~28~~ wherein said chemical modification is of a cysteine residue at amino acid position 51 and/or 60 of the native VEGF amino acid sequence.

³¹
^{30.} (New) An isolated nucleic acid sequence comprising a sequence that encodes the variant VEGF polypeptide of claim ¹⁸ ¹⁷.

³²
^{31.} (New) A replicable expression vector capable in a transformant host cell of expressing the nucleic acid of claim ³¹ ^{30.}

³³
^{32.} (New) Host cells transformed with the vector according to claim ³¹ ³².

³⁴
^{33.} (New) Host cells according to claim ³² ³³ which are Chinese hamster ovary cells.

³⁵
^{34.} (New) A composition of matter comprising the variant VEGF polypeptide according to claim ¹⁸ ¹⁷ in combination with a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.